

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) The tread according to Claim 10 wherein the at least one orifice has an elongated form in a direction at least substantially perpendicular to the running surface of the tread.
3. (Currently Amended) The tread according to Claim 2 wherein the at least one orifice is produced on at least one connecting element between two motifs in relief and said ~~orifices are~~ at least one orifice is arranged as close as possible to one of the opposing faces of said motifs.
4. (Previously Presented) The tread according to Claim 11 wherein the at least one orifice extends as far as a depth at least equal to half the difference between a depth P of the grooves and the depth H.
5. (Previously Presented) The tread according to Claim 10 wherein the at least one orifice is formed between the bottom of a groove and the respective connecting element in said groove, the geometry of the lower face of said connecting

element comprising humps for preventing complete closure of said at least one orifice on passing into the contact.

6. (Previously Presented) The tread according to Claim 10 wherein at least one of the motifs in relief is provided with a channel opening on to two of the lateral faces of said motif, said channel being located beneath the running surface at a depth such that it causes the cavity formed by the connecting elements to communicate with a groove in order to prevent the compression of the air contained in said cavity.

7. (Original) The tread according to Claim 6 wherein each channel is extended towards the contact face of the motif in relief by an incision.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A tire tread comprising a tread pattern formed by a plurality of motifs in relief which are defined by grooves oriented respectively in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction of the tread, each of these motifs comprising a contact face and lateral faces, a plurality of these motifs in relief being ~~connected~~ interconnected two by two by at least two rubber connecting elements molded in a ~~groove~~ respective ones of the grooves during the molding of the tread, these connecting elements defining, with the opposing walls of the motifs

in relief to which they are connected, a cavity which closes in contact with the roadway to trap and compress a volume of air, at least one of the rubber connecting elements comprising at least one orifice passing through the whole of said at least one rubber connecting element to cause the volume of said cavity to communicate with a groove, and wherein the form of the cross-section of the at least one orifice is selected to be practically insensitive to the compression of the rubber resulting from the contact with the roadway and thus prevent its closure.

11. (Previously Presented) The tire tread according to claim 10 wherein the connecting elements extend from a depth H beneath the running surface of the tread, when new, towards the bottom of the groove, wherein the cavity is formed once the wear of the tread reaches a level of wear equal to H.

12. (Previously Presented) The tire tread according to claim 10 wherein the connecting elements extend from the running surface of the tread.

13. (Currently Amended) A tire for use on a heavy vehicle, including a tread comprising a contact face and lateral faces, and a plurality of motifs in relief defined by grooves oriented respectively in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction of the tread, a plurality of these motifs in relief being ~~connected~~ interconnected two by two by at least two rubber connecting elements molded in a groove respective ones of the grooves during the molding of the tread, these connecting elements defining, with the opposing walls of the motifs in relief to which they are connected, a cavity which closes in contact with the roadway to trap and

compress a volume of air, at least one of the rubber connecting elements comprising at least one orifice passing through the whole of said at least one rubber connecting element to cause the volume of said cavity to communicate with a groove, and wherein the form of the cross-section of the at least one orifice is selected to be practically insensitive to the compression of the rubber resulting from the contact with the roadway and thus prevent its closure.

14. (Previously Presented) The tire according to claim 13 wherein the connecting elements extend from a depth H beneath the running surface of the tread, when new, towards the bottom of the groove, wherein the cavity is formed once the wear of the tread reaches a level of wear equal to H.

15. (Previously Presented) The tire according to claim 13 wherein the connecting elements extend from the running surface of the tread.

16. (Currently Amended) A tire tread comprising a tread pattern formed by a plurality of motifs in relief which are defined by grooves which are oriented in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction of the tread, each of these motifs comprising a contact face and lateral faces, a plurality of these motifs in relief being ~~connected~~ interconnected two by two by at least two rubber connecting elements molded in a respective transverse groove during the molding of the tread, these connecting elements defining, with the opposing walls of two motifs in relief to which they are connected, a cavity which closes in contact with the roadway to trap and compress a volume of air, at least one of the two motifs forming the cavity

comprising at least one channel passing through the whole thereof in the longitudinal direction to cause the volume of said cavity to communicate with a groove, and wherein the form of the cross-section of the at least one orifice is selected to be practically insensitive to the compression of the rubber resulting from the contact with the roadway and thus prevent its closure.